

**MEETING SUMMARY #8  
WSF COMMUNITY MEETING  
CLINTON COMMUNITY HALL, CLINTON, WA  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2009 6:30 – 8:30 P.M.**

*Note: This meeting summary represents notes from the Washington State Department of Transportation Ferries Division (WSF) Community Meeting, and is not a formal transcript or minutes. It is provided as a record for the staff and public in attendance, and other interested parties.*

**Welcome and Introductions**

WSDOT Assistant Secretary David H. Moseley

David welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. He introduced his WSF staff members as well as the Ferry Advisory Committee (FAC) members who were in attendance.

David paused to state his regret at hearing the news of the passing of longtime FAC chair Jack Leengran; he gave many years of service to the ferry communities and we want to acknowledge his contributions.

David mentioned that Senator Haugen and Representatives Smith and Bailey were in attendance and thanked them for coming. He then briefly went over the agenda and noted that there would be time for public comment at the end of the meeting.

**Route & Community Specific Issues**

WSDOT Assistant Secretary David H. Moseley

David briefly talked about the disruption in service earlier in the day. There was a sighting of a body near the Mukilteo terminal; we immediately stopped service, called the Coast Guard, and dispatched our rescue boats. The Coast Guard divers came out and scoured the area but did not find anything. We appreciate your patience and know that you understand that safety comes first.

David also discussed the ongoing issues with the intersection at the Mukilteo terminal where people get on and off the boats. There is no question that it is a very busy intersection, and it becomes a safety issue when there is heavy traffic coming both ways; especially in the summer, and with the presence of the foot traffic. We are doing several things to help in the short term. We are using the holding area staff more efficiently; we took the person who used to scan HOVs and motorcycles and moved them over to help with that intersection. We have

expanded the holding area by a full boatload, which does require more staffing. As such we didn't want to hire another person to deal with the intersection, but rather just moved one around to help in that area. Also, the fact that there is only one lane coming down the hill leading to that intersection is troublesome. We are working with the DOT to design dedicated lanes for turning left and right at that intersection, which will help move people through it more efficiently. We hope to identify funds to do that work in the spring, although we can't promise that it will happen that soon. It will cost between \$150,000 and \$200,000; we are looking at some capital savings that we can dedicate to that. We had cameras on that intersection all summer to analyze the foot and car traffic patterns and we know that something needs to be done. We are trying to move forward prior to next summer; we may not be able to but we hope we can.

Next David discussed the proposed relocation of the Mukilteo terminal. The Legislature has asked us to complete the feasibility study and the environmental work to see if the relocation is doable. We have done a lot of work on this but there is more to do. There are the cultural interests of the tribes to take into account; this area is very precious to our Native friends. The Treaty of Point Elliott was signed here, which was a significant event to the tribes. We need to work with the tribal leaders to see if the relocation is compatible with their interests; there are artifacts in the area, and the area itself holds an important cultural meaning for them. It may take a year and a half to come to an understanding of what, if anything, we can do. It is a work in progress.

### **Clarifying Questions from Audience**

1. Can you describe where the new terminal is supposed to be?  
*Yes, it would be about 200 yards north of where it is now, where the oil dock and the tank farm are. The concept is to line it up better with the Sound Transit station.*
2. The year and a half is just for the study; when would it come to fruition?  
*The Legislature said in the 16 year plan that we need to identify some funds to maintain the terminal at the current site; it's old and needs money. If the tribes and the Air Force, who actually owns the property, feel that it is feasible to relocate the terminal, then we would go out looking for the money. There is a 40 million dollar gap between what's dedicated and what's needed.*
3. What would the timeframe be?  
*I would think 8-12 years.*  
And you're negotiating with the tribes?  
*Constantly.*
4. I've been using public transit for 4 years. I don't understand how you've let the congestion at that intersection slide for this long. Mukilteo is



closing parking lots, which added 300 cars to the congestion. You've expanded your own parking lot; the point is that Front Street is always congested and all you've done is put more people in there. All of us commuters coming off the train, we interfere with the traffic as well. It makes no sense the work you did on that lot; all you did was lower the line up the road but really the situation is worse.

*We now have sufficient space within the tollbooths to load a boat. We moved staff around to load more efficiently. We studied how much longer it takes to load the boat now, and it's only 3-4 minutes longer.*

If your goal is to limit vehicles and emissions, why didn't you fight for those lots? All you've done is add a boat load of cars that you didn't have before.

*We didn't make the decision.*

You could have stepped in.

*We don't own the property, and we didn't decide what to do with it.*

It's a bigger problem now than it was before.

*There is no question of that; that's why we are looking at adding the dedicated turn lanes.*

That doesn't address the cars.

*It will if we can get people to use Sound and Community Transit more.*

5. If you added a few more trains, you could cut out the people in the middle of the day who drive; they would walk on. Right now there are only 4 trains in the morning and 4 in the afternoon, nothing in the middle.

*I will let Sound Transit know.*

6. Most people on the island wouldn't be able to get where we're going with the public transportation. You can't take a bus to Costco or the Dr's office. This idea of walking on and off is bogus; it won't work.

*That is why we offer car service as well as walk-on service.*

7. I've been commuting on the ferry for 20 years, and I've seen it change a lot over that time. My last 10 years have been in a vanpool and I've noticed some things in the last 6 months since you've expanded the lot. The cars that are staging don't pay any attention to the stop sign, so they block the area and the vanpools coming down the hill can't get in; now they're stuck in the street causing a backup. Some vanpools insist on using the first tollbooth even when the others are open and end up blocking the street, which doesn't make sense. Also, is there any thought about the light at 5<sup>th</sup>? Maybe you can let the local traffic go first, then the ferry traffic second? The cars up there aren't going to make the boat anyway, and if the local traffic is allowed to go it might reduce the congestion issue.

*We can look at that. Thank you for the good feedback.*

8. To clarify, if you were to move the terminal, you would move the dolphins and the loading area?  
*Yes.*  
*Your thought is to move the congestion from that intersection?*  
*Yes, and to provide a better connection with the transit agencies as well as a better holding area for cars.*  
*The foot traffic is causing some of the congestion; what about an overpass for them, like a bridge, if you move the terminal?*  
*In the new terminal it would be a straight shot for them.*
9. When you're coming off the boat in Mukilteo, a red light comes on and you have to stop; why?  
*It is an automatic light to allow for the cross traffic to get through.*  
*Isn't that what your flaggers are for?*  
*It was required by an agreement with the City of Mukilteo when they allowed us to make some improvements.*  
*Well it slows down the offload.*
10. I'm a motorcycle rider. The change you made to make us go through the tollbooth is dangerous; we now have to cut off the cars waiting at the booths, and cross a double white line. There's got to be a better way.  
*That is a work in progress. We have to be efficient and use the staff that we have; we can't afford to hire more staff. We had to move the hand scanners to use them at that intersection. I agree that we started doing that without the proper signage, which we should not have.*  
*If you're going to do \$150,000 worth of work at that intersection, then include a lane for motorcycles and vanpools with it.*  
*That may be part of the design; I will check.*
11. I think it is discriminatory to make seniors and the disabled walk up to the tollbooths.  
*Yes, that is a problem.*  
*Why do you do that?*  
*We have no staff to provide ticket sales at the terminal.*  
*Why not let them buy their tickets at the kiosk?*  
*We need to make sure that the people purchasing reduced fare tickets actually qualify for them.*  
*So you're making them walk all the way up there.*  
*That is a problem that we need a solution for. We were experiencing fare evasion by people who didn't qualify for the reduced fares. There was a large increase in those fares being purchased; when we asked them to purchase them at the tollbooth the discounts dropped.*  
*People have the option to purchase a renewable pass.*  
*Yes, you can do that without going to the tollbooth.*

12. There is an easy solution: they can buy the ticket at the kiosk, and then the ferry worker who scans it when they get on can catch them if they're not qualified.  
*These comments are being recorded; we will follow up on that.*
13. You put in the Wave2Go scanning system and you're not even using it. Why not use the example of the European rail system: have people buy their tickets and then punch them at kiosks, then someone on the boat checks occasionally to keep them honest.  
*These are all good ideas that we need to explore.*  
You don't have to check everyone; just the threat of being checked will keep people honest.  
*It's worth looking at ways to do it on the boat, we will look at that.*  
You could do a blitz one day and check everyone as they come off, then let the threat keep people in line.
14. The vanpools and motorcycles that are now having to go through the tollbooths, if they went through the old way and then walked back up to pay, would that work?  
*That may back up traffic more.*  
Could they be checked once they're on the boat?  
*Maybe.*  
90% of them have prepaid passes anyway.
15. In terms of the congestion on Front Street, you have the people getting off the boat and walking to Ivar's. There are crosswalks on three sides of that intersection, but not on that side. If you extend the fence it might help.  
*Yes, we agree that it is very dangerous right now and we are looking at ways to mitigate that.*
16. I have a technical detail to ask about concerning the Wave2Go card. If I want to know how many rides I have left, it only stays there for a second. If I don't catch it then I have to go ask the person, it's too fast.  
*It should be printed on the receipt.*  
If you don't get a receipt – which happens – or you can't read it, then you're stuck.  
*I was under the impression that this issue had been resolved; we will revisit it with our IT people.*

### **New Vessel Program**

WSDOT Assistant Secretary David H. Moseley

David discussed the construction of the new ferry at Todd Shipyard. We are currently undergoing construction of the first 64-car ferry. The project is on time and on budget; it is looking like a boat at this point rather than a bunch of pieces of steel. We have monthly meetings with Todd Shipyard which are very

informative. It will be completed by the end of June next year, and then there will be testing and sea trials for 4-6 weeks. We expect the new vessel to be in service on the Port Townsend / Keystone run in August of 2010. This is our first new boat in 10-12 years and we are very pleased. We recently had a bid opening for 2 more 64-car ferries with an option for a third. The bid came in much better than the first bid, so even though there was only one bidder again, there was still a significant savings. We issued the Notice to Proceed last week, from which point Todd has 540 days to complete the 2<sup>nd</sup> boat. They may beat that milestone by a couple of weeks because the engineering work is the same. Then the 3<sup>rd</sup> boat is due to be complete in January of 2012; that boat will replace the Rhody on the Point Defiance / Tahlequah route. Our next step is to start building 144-car boats. We would like to go right into building the larger boats rather than a fourth 64-car boat.

### **Clarifying Questions from Audience**

1. Will you get rid of the reservation system when the new boat goes to Port Townsend?

*Probably not; there will still only be one vehicle boat at that point.*

2. Two of the new boats are going to that run?

*That is correct, service would be returned to the level it was at before the steel electrics were pulled.*

3. How will this boat compare to what's already there?

*Right now we have one 50-car boat. It's doing a great job for what it is, but it doesn't have the power of the new 64-car boats.*

4. Will these new boats have the same cancelled sailings issue?

*There are still going to be tidal issues in the harbor, so we will still have tidal cancellations. It is a more powerful and longer boat which will help it in bad weather, so it should be able to handle much rougher seas; we won't have the same number of weather cancellations.*

5. Is the relocation of the Keystone terminal off the table?

*Yes. We looked at the design of the Island Home vessels because we knew it would function well in that harbor.*

6. Will one of the bigger boats come to this route?

*The first 144-car boat would go to Mukilteo / Clinton and the 2<sup>nd</sup> would go to Bremerton / Seattle.*

*The terminals can handle those boats?*

*Yes.*

*When can we expect those?*

*Sometime in 2014 or 2015 if funds become available.*

### **Vehicle Reservations Pre-Design Study**

WSDOT Assistant Secretary David H. Moseley

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David began the discussion about vehicle reservations by stating that he fully understands how controversial and important this subject is to this community. I want to clarify what exactly the Legislature has directed us to do. They have directed us to conduct a pre-design study of what a reservations system would look like. What would the IT / back office technology have to be to serve the needs of our customers? What business rules would need to be in place to make the system work well and be flexible? I want to be clear - the Legislature has not authorized us to implement reservations anywhere. They want to see the pre-design report to understand how reservations would work, and to make sure that it would be helpful to customers rather than an inconvenience. This is only worth doing if it can help our customers as well as help us spread our demand better.

David continued the discussion by explaining some of the reasons for reservations. You know about the steel electrics being pulled from service. That event combined with the fact that our entire fleet is aging has led to all of the funding being directed toward building new boats. There is no funding for terminal expansion. There are congestion issues at our terminals, and because of the financial situation that the state is in we have had to identify some strategies that will allow us to better use the space that we have without expanding any of our facilities. A reservation system may be one way to mitigate some of the demand, reduce wait times, and cut down on the amount of vehicles idling at the tollbooths. It was identified in our Long Range Plan and the Legislature directed us to take a closer look at this possibility. If we were able to take the line at the tollbooth and turn it into a list of reserved cars, we could try to push the demand out to underutilized trips. If we are able to provide our customers with certainty about the boat they will be able to get on, so they can just come down and get on the boat, we may be able to attract more users by offering that service. By doing this we are trying to avoid having to expand our existing terminals.

The Legislature wants to know how this would work, what terminal processing enhancements we would need, the costs/benefits/risks, and the IT back office needs. As we go through the pre-design study, our first goal is to not limit our users' abilities to travel. Also, the system has to be easy to use and flexible. We want to improve our ferry communities' environments and mitigate expensive terminal construction. We sent out a Request for Information to the industry to determine what types of reservation programs are available off the shelf. We received six responses that were very useful, and helped us to see some features that our customers might like. We also contacted more than a dozen ferry systems around the world that use reservations, including some in England

and Istanbul, Turkey. There are many similarities between our system and these other systems, but also many differences. We have benefited from learning about what has worked and not worked for these other systems.

We have also split up into work groups to pursue a variety of topics, one of which is the business rules that would need to be in place to accomplish our goals. We need these rules to be able to spread our demand better, but also to protect all of our different types of users. We needed to apply this study to a specific route, and we chose Edmonds / Kingston, which has turned out to be a great choice. It is a challenging route, which has all the different user types and also carries the most cars in our entire system. We formed a partnership group in July made up of a variety of users from both sides of that route, and we have been meeting to discuss the proposed system. They have been very constructive, asking lots of great questions, and we appreciate the time they have put in.

Next we are expected to present the draft pre-design report to the Legislature on December 15<sup>th</sup>. We have one more partnership meeting before then and lots of work to do. It is a huge task to bring together all of what we have learned. We envision that after the document is finalized, every route will be slightly different, and the pre-design report won't cover every characteristic of every route. We don't know what the future holds, we don't know if this will be implemented on some routes and not others; it may not be a one size fits all system.

### **Clarifying Questions from Audience**

1. There have been a number of meetings on this subject, so I'm sure you've heard this – South Whidbey does not want reservations! You know the reasons; if it's a matter of money, you're talking about customer service here! We are being penalized for your lack of planning! Higher fares, less service, and now reservations. We don't want this! Why aren't you listening? It's a sham! There is a huge commuter base on this run; where else does somebody have to make a reservation to run an errand? It's not fair! If you want money put tolls across the state on the roads. I don't believe you need reservations. You're standing here like you haven't heard what we've been saying!  
*I have heard you.*
2. You are saying that you haven't heard because you're bringing it up again! You're not listening! This is the singularly most inane idea ever by WSF! You're pointing your fingers at others like, oh, I just work here; it's beyond belief! It doesn't make sense. You and the Legislature are not listening and not thinking about your customers; it's a shame. You are not listening! You're not! Why are you still talking about this?





3. I was in Keystone and I asked the business owners if they like the reservations and none of them like it! One day we had boats and the next day we didn't; the people are still stuck with reservations. It doesn't work! It won't work here; we will protest it!
4. (A member of the crowd asked the group a question) How many people here have made a reservation? (15-20 out of 50 people raised their hands)
5. How will the reservation system handle it if I work in Redmond, I get off at five, and sometimes I make it to the ferry in 30 minutes and other times its an hour and forty-five minutes? Which boat would I reserve?  
*We have been looking extensively into ways to provide flexibility within the system. If you have a reservation on the 5:30 boat and you can't get there, we will accommodate you for when you can get there. We have to be able to provide that flexibility, especially for return trips.*  
It's coming back when there's uncertainty.  
*We have heard that loud and clear.*  
You can't control the Seattle traffic.
6. After you added reservations in Port Townsend, we had to sleep in our truck on the dock coming home one night. The ferry runs were cancelled that night before my reserved run. I understand the reason for cancelling, but I didn't get a phone call! You have my number on the reservation; why was I not notified?  
*I don't know. That is a very good question.*
7. I want to know who thinks of this crap and do they ever commute on a ferry!
8. Has anyone thought about giving the on-island residents a pass? Let the tourists make reservations. We go to the front of the line, let us get on and off at our will; let them make reservations.  
*We are looking at ways to give priority access to those that need it. We could use reservations to move people who have flexibility to underutilized sailings.*  
Like the vanpools; if you live here you get in one lane, tourists get in another.
9. These questions have been around for awhile; are you any closer to answering them?  
*Yes, that will be available in the pre-design report.*
10. I have been riding the ferry 400+ times a year for 20 years. Only once in all that time would a reservation have been nice, and that was when I needed to make a plane and couldn't make it. That's the only time in all those years. It's not worth it.



11. We have bigger boats on the drawing board; why is it necessary to think about reservations? If we will have more capacity why waste the money on reservations? It's not an issue.  
*If we get the money to build the 144-car boats, which is not guaranteed, that is only 20 additional car spaces; that's not going to do it.*  
Why not concentrate on that? We don't want reservations!
12. Do you envision that all cars will have to have a reservation or just some of them?  
*We would never reserve 100% of the boat.*  
So there would be X number of reservations, then the rest would be first come, first served?  
*That is correct.*  
So you will have two separate lines going up the hill?  
*They will be processed at the tollbooth so it will be clear where to go.*  
What about those busy sailings, like Sunday afternoons, when you have a line going 2 miles up the road?  
*The reserved cars would go straight to the tollbooth.*  
It will make the line longer and people will wait more!
13. 99% of the time we don't have a clue when we will be coming back. If I go shopping, it would be like throwing darts to know when I'm coming home.  
*So don't make a reservation. Drive standby. It would be no different than what you deal with now.*  
The whole boat is reserved!  
*No.*
14. You have a flow problem. You have to allow for a better flow at the terminal. How much will this reservation system cost?  
*Around 20 million.*  
Take some of that money and figure out the flow at the terminals better.  
*That is part of the pre-design study.*  
Look at the capacity, figure out the summer peaks. If you do it correctly you won't need reservations. You can solve the problem by changing the dynamics of how you move people. You don't need reservations; you're working backwards! Smooth out the system and you won't need to add that additional layer.  
*How would you smooth that out?*  
The fundamental problems are on the east side. You can't get to the terminal, there are transit problems, all you're doing is slamming in more cars; Mukilteo needs those turn lanes. Improve that flow instead of layering on an artificial meter.
15. I may be in the minority here, but I don't understand what all this rancor is about when they're only doing a study. Why are we going crazy in here?  
(Crowd yells back – we're not being listened to!) Hold it! You had your

- floor time, now let me talk. Do you think that just because they're doing a study, that means we have no say? (Crowd yells back – yes! Lots of general noise and arguing ensues)
16. We don't want this and you're not listening!  
*I would ask you to suspend your disbelief until you can read the study and see what it says. It will be available online.*
17. I have seen other systems where residents can get through and the tourists have to make a reservation, many systems work that way. Let's not go crazy and have this uproar until we know what the study says.
18. (Senator Haugen) Remember that this was not David's idea.
19. The Joint Transportation Committee tasked you with finding ways to make sure we have certainty. What we really want is just manageable uncertainty; incorrect assumptions will lead you to arrive at incorrect solutions.
20. My wife and I travel a lot; sometimes the line is longer that we anticipated, but we have figured out how to make the system work. We've come to believe that if we want to catch a ferry we need to be there 30 minutes beforehand, which works most of the time. If it doesn't, we're not upset with you. It's the way of life on an island. You need to look at this in your study: people here manage their own destinies; we've learned to work with it. We rely on you to do your best to make the system as good as possible and you've done a good job mainly. It's extremely frustrating when an idea like reservations sticks; the perception is that we're not being listened to.
21. You say some communities are not against this; can you elaborate and identify those?  
*We've heard a lot of interest in the San Juan Islands, and Edmonds / Kingston have many who are interested as well, and Bainbridge. As far as Vashon is concerned, they feel like you do. Port Townsend residents like it, although they would like the current system to be improved.*
22. Those are very different routes. I have studied this system in depth, and each route has very different characteristics. Commuter routes that arrive in a sensible place like Seattle and those that arrive at silly places like Mukilteo and Fauntleroy, why would they have the same system?  
*It won't be the same. The technology would be the same, but we would go through the same partnership process that we are doing at Edmonds / Kingston before we would ever implement reservations; every route is different.*
23. I'm mystified by why you're not thinking about alternatives. I was really disappointed when the summer super surcharge was rejected; that was a poor move by the transportation commission. To me, here are the facts:

the traffic at Mukilteo is not increasing. For the last 8-9 years, the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of this year was the first uptick, correct?

*Yes, that's true.*

People have the perception that it's getting worse; it's not. Right now we might wait for one boat; it's fine nine months out of the year. It's only in the summer on Friday and Sunday afternoons that there's a problem. Why don't we think about ways to just shave off those peaks; use a pricing mechanism to shave those peaks down and use the money to lower fares for the rest of the year?

*We looked at congestion pricing in the Long Range Plan, and it was rejected by the Legislature.*

We as residents wouldn't have to pay.

*You would if you went at peak times.*

But we would get it back during the rest of the year.

24. You've had this reservation system at Port Townsend for awhile; is there a user survey available?

*We have talked to the FAC on both sides of that run; we've had extensive conversations with them.*

Is there a user survey available?

*We have not done one.*

I'm a data person, and I'm hearing a lot of dissention here. I don't understand why. Read the 1991 study online.

*That was about the San Juans.*

It talks about a lot of the same issues. It's clear that reservations would help spread the assets. Raising prices diminishes demand; that is not the goal or the solution. That reduces traffic but it also reduces commerce in our communities. We can't build bigger and bigger boats. I don't understand the problems you're all having to this extent, the anger.

25. It's the loss of my flexibility and my spontaneity!

26. You have to have a credit card! I won't get my money back if I don't get there in time!

27. Giving priority to residents seems like it's not equal; I don't like that. We all should have an equal shot, commuter and tourist alike. Peak pricing has always bothered me; more people riding should make it cheaper because it costs less per mile when the boat is fuller. The tourists shouldn't have to pay for us; we should all be equally responsible through the ticket price. Knowing that the reservation system will be looked at differently for each route is comforting; I can see that it would really make sense for the San Juans. Can you tell me what problems we are trying to solve with reservations?

*That's a good question. We don't have unlimited boats and terminal space. We have peak times that create problems on many routes: long*



*lines, idling cars, congested communities. Their businesses come to a halt because of our traffic in their downtown areas for hours on end. Also, we have an excess of space on some sailings and we feel it would be more efficient if we were able to shift the riders that have some flexibility into those sailing times. We need to maximize our current assets; we don't have the money for bigger boats, more runs, and bigger terminals or we would not be having this conversation.*

28. Another way to look at the process is to have a base price and then give a discount for off-peak sailings.

*That's congestion pricing. We just want people to come for the boat they would be getting on anyway, but they can spend their time doing something other than sitting in line for hours. That's the predictability benefit.*

29. Is someone looking at a Puget Sound Regional Transit system rather than just the ferries? If I have to go to Seattle for a whole day, I'm fine. If I want to go for half a day I have to take a car. If I want to go to the eastside I have to take a car. We need more options; who's looking? *The Puget Sound Regional Council. They are looking at more options and a more robust system. Other transportation organizations in other counties are looking at that as well.*

*It would go a long way toward solving your congestion problem.*

*Sound Transit is putting in light rail and commuter rail. There is more coming; we are working on it.*

30. You're not looking at the whole picture. This run is like crossing 520; we don't need a reservation for that. Look at the whole picture.

31. I just got back from Texas and I paid 3 tolls to use their transportation. Why don't we have more toll roads here? Ferries should be part of the whole system.

*Tolls are coming.*

32. Have you done a feasibility study on running a third boat during peak times in the summer?

*That has been part of our previous Long-Range Plan efforts. A 3<sup>rd</sup> boat is not part of the more realistically financially restrained plan. We are facing a huge financial hurdle just to maintain the current system. The plan is for a modest capacity increase by replacing the aging vessels with slightly larger ones.*

*Will the new terminal at Mukilteo have two slips?*

*No, it will have one slip with the ability for it to be expanded in the future.*

*Is there a chance of running a 3<sup>rd</sup> boat in the future?*

*No. Not in the foreseeable future.*

33. I use the Port Townsend / Keystone run. When we lost our boats it was a crisis situation, and I was lobbying to do this study because I looked at it

- as a tool to address some of the problems we were facing. The intent of this study and any subsequent system is not one-size-fits-all. I hope this study will be completed with the business rules identified so if the Legislature decides to fund it, it can be customized to each route. I'm not shooting the messenger; I know you were directed to do this. Work with each community and talk about the options; this is a tool that is available to us. If you don't want it you don't have to have it. But if we do want this it should be available; don't take away my option to have this. It's ok that you don't want it and it's ok if I do. Let us make the decision route by route.
34. I have a question for the returning trip. If some people have reservations and some don't you have to separate the two at some point, but there's only one lane coming down. If people get into the general traffic line, they would get jammed up at the bottom.  
*At Mukilteo if you don't have a reservation you would get in line like you do now. If you have a reservation you would stay in the regular traffic lane and go directly to the tollbooth.*  
But there will be people lined up at the tollbooth.  
*We will process people quickly.*
35. A criticism of this idea is that it will negatively impact commerce. Can you validate or invalidate that? Do we have data on that?  
*Part of what we would want to do is offer lower demand sailing reservations 6 months out to attract the tourists to those less busy times of the day. As they make their flight and hotel reservations they can do their ferry reservation at the same time, and we can place them at times where we have excess capacity. More priority would be given to locals for the peak sailings which would not be available to reserve until 30 days out.*  
Do you have any thoughts as to whether this will have a positive or negative impact on the tourist routes?  
*It will have a positive impact. Many people don't even consider going to the San Juans in the summer because they know they could face a 6 hour wait. If we could provide them certainty, I believe it could increase the amount of tourists in those communities.*

At this point there were no more comments or questions and David addressed the group. We are very aware that many people here don't want a reservation system. My responsibility is to look at our ferry system as a whole. Whether this gets applied to any particular route requires much more discussion. I have no interest in jamming this down your throats. In places where it would make sense, it would be helpful to have this tool to implement.

## **Preparing for the 2010 Legislative Session**



WSDOT Assistant Secretary David H. Moseley

David discussed the upcoming 2010 Legislative session. As you know WSF was front and center during the 2009 Legislative session, with Plan B in the spotlight. We don't anticipate that same attention in the 2010 session. There are some important things they have asked to see; the reservations pre-design study is one of those. Also they want to see a new accident and incident investigation policy, fuel conservation targets, and information regarding a fuel surcharge in case gas prices spike again. Those are some issues that will be discussed; these are reports on things that the Legislature has asked us to look at, but they are not hot-button issues like the Long-Range Plan last year and the vessel and terminal issues. The JTC (Joint Transportation Committee) is doing a study on alternative funding options for transportation, because the gas tax is dropping as cars become more fuel efficient. In 2016 there is a one billion dollar gap in funding for the ferry system, and we need to fill that gap. That discussion will be occurring more in the 2011 session, but we need to be ready and at the table for those discussions. If there is a comprehensive transportation package for the Legislature to consider we need to be a part of it.

Senator Haugen agreed with David's statement and mentioned that they are looking for long term funding and WSF is on the list.

Representative Smith mentioned that the budget situation will take a lot of discussion; there are lots of serious issues and we need to work together.

Representative Bailey spoke about her work on the Ways and Means Committee and the serious issues that we are facing. Also, about the ferries, we need to realize that we have the largest and the best ferry system in the country. Many people come here enamored with what we have; it's a special thing. Understand that every elected official values WSF and are working long, hard hours to ensure that our water highway service continues to be provided. It is a fine balance considering the economic situation we are in. The ferries have been neglected for a long time; hopefully we are on the road to fixing that.

### **Public Comments & Questions**

1. I would like to applaud the WSF maintenance crews that helped those steel electrics last 80 years. It's quite remarkable; they deserve a pat on the back.

### **Conclusion**

David thanked everyone for coming. Meeting was adjourned.

**Written Comments (Transcribed)**

- (Rod Roehuett) Thank you for meeting with us in the evening.
  - a) A possible way to resolve some of the lines and wait times would be to increase the parking on the mainland side. This would let more of the island folk be walk-ons and leave the car slots open.
  - b) Changing the Wave2Go system in 2 ways could increase revenue and customer satisfaction.
    1. Let the Wave2Go cards be good for an unlimited time period. This increases the dollars the system has to produce income (interest) and there will be more rides never redeemed.
    2. The second change to Wave2Go: make it a debit style card that can be used on any ferry and get the better rate. The customer using an auto fill card is always keeping a balance on the ferry systems' books and is earning a preferred rate by keeping dollars in their account.